

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraph 31 on page 8 as follows:

[0031] The first molded hub portion 42 is positioned along the interior surface 50a of the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40 such that a flange portion 54 of the first molded hub portion 42 is adjacent to the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40 and a forward portion 56 of the first molded hub portion extends through hole 52 in the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40. The needle 46 is mounted within a central channel 58 of the first molded hub portion 42 just beyond the hole 52 in the skirt 40. The needle 46 extends to a stop 58a, shown in Fig. 4, formed in the channel 58 such that the needle can be reliably inserted to the same depth during manufacture. The stop 58a limits the insertion depth of the needle 46 within the first molded hub portion 42. Only a short length of the needle 46 is held within the first molded hub portion 42.

Please amend paragraph 34 on pages 8 and 9 as follows:

[0034] The second molded hub portion 44 is disposed on the outside of the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40. It abuts the exterior surface 50b of the needle-supporting end 50 and creates a meltzone 64 where the pieces 42 and 44 are permanently joined. During formation of hub portion 44, the first molded hub portion 42 is remelted so that the portions 42 and 44 are joined together. As can be seen most clearly in FIGURES 2 and 3, the second molded hub portion 44 includes a number of radially extending ribs 66 which abut the exterior surface 50b of the needle-supporting end 50 and extend outwardly across it. The ribs 66 act to stabilize and reinforce the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40 and prevent it from warping, distorting, or otherwise deforming due to the stresses encountered during automatic injection.

Contiguous with the ribs 66 is a forwardly-extending tapering portion 68 which supports the needle 46 along a greater portion of its length. Because of the first and second molded hub portions 42, 44, the needle-supporting end 50 of the skirt 40 is reinforced and the needle 46 itself is well supported.